

MARCO RUBIO  
FLORIDA

## United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

COMMITTEES:  
APPROPRIATIONS  
FOREIGN RELATIONS  
SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE  
SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

March 20, 2018

The Honorable R. D. James  
Assistant Secretary of the Army – Civil Works  
Department of the Army  
108 Army Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20310-0108

Dear Assistant Secretary James:

I write to draw your attention to the urgent need to study, design, and construct a comprehensive seepage management solution along the boundary of the eastern Everglades in Miami-Dade County, independent from ongoing Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan program efforts. As your office continues to work with all three levels of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to identify, evaluate, and take action on flood and storm damage reduction projects in 2017 hurricane-impacted states eligible for supplemental disaster funding, I urge you to include this important flood protection measure.

Above-normal summer rainfall and Hurricane Irma combined to expose flood risks throughout this area last year. The Corps was even forced to excavate a section of the L-359 levee bordering the 8.5 square mile area to drain rising flood waters into the C-111 North detention area in Hurricane Irma's immediate aftermath. This incident has increased concerns held by the South Florida Water Management District that existing flood mitigation features may not be adequate. Additionally, enhancing flood protection for agricultural areas adjacent to Everglades National Park in southwestern Miami-Dade County remains an unaddressed concern from the perspective of many of the region's growers.

In my role on the Senate Appropriations Committee, I worked diligently to write and pass a disaster supplemental appropriations package that would provide all necessary funding to secure the repair of federal flood control and Everglades infrastructure in Florida that had been damaged by Hurricane Irma. Signed into law on February 9, 2018 as part of the Bipartisan Budget Act, this legislation provides sufficient funding to also address key flood risk management priorities for Floridians across the state, including:

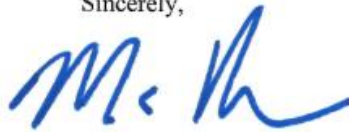
- expedited rehabilitation of the Herbert Hoover Dike at full federal cost;
- beach renourishment for degraded shore protection and beach erosion control projects;
- the capability to conduct the South Atlantic Coast Comprehensive Study that I championed in the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act of 2016; and
- emergency authority to develop new, innovative projects that secure long term flood mitigation and protection benefits.

I urge you to utilize this emergency authority as granted in division B, title IV of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 to work with the South Florida Water Management District to study, design, and

construct a new flood and storm damage reduction project that addresses seepage and flood risks along the boundary of the eastern Everglades in Miami-Dade County. Comprehensive seepage management is desperately needed to protect private property and to mitigate flooding concerns for South Dade farmers. Additionally, improved seepage management would also benefit the broader Corps mission in South Florida by helping sustain the broad public support for implementing the Modified Water Deliveries to Everglades National Park project and realizing the full potential of the Central Everglades Planning Project in restoring the hydrological connections between the northern Everglades and Florida Bay.

Thank you for your attention to this request.

Sincerely,



Marco Rubio  
U.S. Senator

cc: Mr. Ernie Marks  
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